

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 PALERM 00617 01 OF 02 261703Z  
ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SCA-01 L-03 H-02 SSO-00  
/019 W

-----073427 261713Z /41

O 261525Z AUG 77

FM AMCONSUL PALERMO

TO AMCONSUL STUTTGART IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2200

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMCONSUL MILAN

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 PALERMO 0617/1

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CDES IT (MONG, RONALD K.)

SUBJECT: DEATH OF RONALD K MONG

REF: STUTTGART 1410

THE UNDERTAKER CALLED ON AUG. 25, AND PROVIDED US WITH THE FOLLOWING  
INFORMATION:

HE HIMSELF WAS ON VACATION WHEN DEATH OCCURRED ON JULY 21 BUT  
ONCE HIS FIRM ENTRUSTED WITH PREPARATION OF THE REMAINS FOR  
SHIPMENT TO STUTTGART HE WAS IN CONSTANT TOUCH WITH HIS STAFF IN  
CASTELVETRANO, A PROVINCIAL TOWN SOME 75 MILES FROM PALERMO. HIS  
RECONSTRUCTION OF EVENTS FOLLOWS:

1. DEATH OCCURRED JULY 21 AT CONTRADA GAGGERA, NEAR SELINUNTE ,  
PROVINCE OF TRAPANI.
  2. THE BODY WAS BROUGHT TO THE CEMETERY AT CASTELVETRANO THAT  
SAME EVENING.
  3. THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL DIRECTOR DECIDED AGAINST AN AUTOPSY.
  4. ON JULY 23, THE UNDERTAKER WAS ENTRUSTED WITH PREPARATION OF  
REMAINS FOR SHIPMENT TO STUTTGART.
  5. BY LAW, EMBALMING MUST BE DONE BY THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL  
DIRECTOR AND MUST TAKE PLACE NO LATER THAN 24 HRS. , AND NOT  
LATER THAN 48 HRS.. AFTER DEATH. IT DID TAKE PLACE WITHIN THIS
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PAGE 02 PALERM 00617 01 OF 02 261703Z

TIME LIMIT. METHOD OF EMBALMING USED WAS 30 PER CENT FORMALINE  
INJECTIONS. A MEMBER OF HIS STAFF WAS PRESENT WHEN INJECTIONS  
MADE.

6. REMAINS WERE READY FOR SHIPMENT JULY 26.

7. FURTHER DELAYS WERE CAUSED BY:

A. NON-RECEIPT OF FUNDS FOR SHIPMENT UNTIL JULY 28.

B. REJECTION BY AIRPORT AUTHORITIES OF THE SHIPMENT ON JULY 29,

BECAUSE OF BAD ODORS EMANATING FROM THE CASKET NECESSITATING RETURN OF BODY TO CASTELVETRANO WHERE AN ADDITIONAL ZINK-LINED CASKET AND OUTER BOX HAD TO BE MADE.

8. SHIPMENT WAS ACCEPTED AT AIRPORT ON JULY 30, 1977, BUT COULD NOT BE LOADED ONTO SCHEDULED PALERMO/ROMA/STUTTGART FLIGHT BECAUSE OF LACK OF SPACE BUT WAS ACCEPTED FOR THE LATER FLIGHT WHICH WAS THE PALERMO/MILAN/STUTTGART FLIGHT.

ONCE ACCEPTED BY ITALIAN AIRPORT OFFICIALS UNDERTAKER SAYS HIS RESPONSIBILITIES ENDED.

9. IT WAS ONLY ON AUGUST 1 THAT HE LEARNED FROM US THAT THE REMAINS WERE OFF-LOADED AT MILAN. THE PILOT OF THE INCOMING PLANE DETECTED ODORS PENETRATING THE PASSENGER CABIN AND REPORTED THE MATTER TO AIRPORT AUTHORITIES ON ARRIVAL. THE DETERMINED THE RE-BOXING WAS AGAIN NECESSARY. WHAT MAY HAVE HAPPENED AFTER THAT WOULD ONLY BE A MATTER OF CONJECTURE. THE CASKET COULD HAVE BEEN DROPPED WHILE IT WAS BEING LOADED OR BEEN PUNCTURED IN SOME WAY THROUGH KNOCKING ABOUT OR COLLISION WHILE ENROUTE.

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PAGE 01 PALERM 00617 02 OF 02 261702Z  
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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SCA-01 L-03 H-02 SSO-00  
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O 261545Z AUG 77

FM AMCONSUL PALERMO

TO AMCONSUL STUTTGART IMMEDIATE

INFO/FUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2201

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMCONSUL MILAN

UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 PALERMO 0617/2

.....WHILE ENROUTE.

10. SHIPMENT FINALLY LEFT MILAN FOR DESTINATION ON AUGUST 2. REGARDING HIS FEE, HE WANTS MONIES TO KNOW TOTAL BILL AMOUNTS TO DOLS. 907.88 BOKEN DOWN AS FOLLOWS:

A. DOLS. 607.25 FOR BOXING (WE KNOW FROM PAST EXPERIENCE THAT ZINK-LINED CASKET AND PACKING AND OUTER BOXING COSTS IN ITALY CAN BE VERY HIGH).

B. FORMALINE INJECTIONS WHICH MUST BE PAID TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES AMOUNTED TO DOLS. 17.00.

C. DOCUMENTATIONS, LABOUR AND TRASPORTATION FROM PLACE OF DEATH  
TO PALERMO AIRPORT CAME TO DOLS. 283.63.

HE IS NOT CHARGING THE MONGS FOR THE EXTRA LABOUR MATERIAL AND  
TRANSPORTATION INVOLVED IN REPREPARATION OF THE REMAINS ON  
JULY 28, WHICH HE ESTIMATES AMOUNTED TO ABOUT DOLS. 250.00.

HE STRESSED THAT BACAUSE OF THE FACTORS SUCH AS REQUIRED ITALIAN  
FEES AND THE HIGH FIXED COST OF MATERIALS AND LABOUR (SEE ABOVE)  
HE CANNOT FURTHER REDUCE HIS FEES.

REGARDING THE STATE OF RONALD'S REMAINS UPON ARRIVAL IN  
STUTTGART, WE CAN ONLY SUGGESOTHAT THE LACK OF REFRIGERATION  
FACILITIES IN CASTELVETRANO, THE TIME LOST BECAUSE OF ITALIAN  
LEGAL REQUIREMENTS, THE DELAYED RECEIPT OF FUNDS, AND FACT  
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PAGE 02 PALERM 00617 02 OF 02 261702Z

THAT FORMALINE INJECTIONS ARE NOT GUARANTEE AGAINST RAPID  
DECOMPOSITION IN WEATHER CONDITIONS PREVAILING IN SICILY WERE  
ALL CONTRIBUTING FACTORS.

FURTHER, WE HAVE TRIED TO ASCERTAIN WHETHER DAMAGE OCCURRED  
TO CASKETS WHILE THEY IN TRANSIT BUT ALITALIA AIRLINE HAS NO RECORD  
SUCH DAMAGE. REQUEST YOU PASS AGAIN TO THE MONGS OUR  
CONDOLENCES. WE SHARE THEIR DISTRESS OVER PROBLEMS IN RETURNING  
REMAINS TO STUTTGART. COLLINS

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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** CDES, IT, (MONG, RONALD K)  
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**Type:** TE  
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